

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.

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"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

NOT A NEGATIVE ENTRANCE

Many folk talk about what they have to give up to become a Christian; and to hear them discourse on the subject of entrance into God's Kingdom, you would think that all you had to do to qualify for an entrance was to refrain from this or that. But, this is not at all the case! *Entrance is enjoyed by appropriation, not prohibition; by receiving, not leaving.* This is not to say that we may appreciate fellowship with God while yet dominated by fleshly desires, or that we may revel in the flesh and walk in the Spirit at the same time. Certainly the man in Christ has "come out from among them" and become "separate"; but not in his own strength or power - it took grace dispensed from the "God and Father of all grace"! God has made us to obtain faith - "like precious faith" (II Pet. 1:1); He "gave" us "repentance" (Acts 5:31; II Tim. 2:25-26). We were "led" of the Spirit to "be baptized" (I Cor. 12:13). We were "raised (by God) to walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12). We have "received" forgiveness of sins, cleansing from all unrighteousness, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified (Acts 26:18; I John 1:7-9). We "received" Christ (John 1:12), and the Holy Spirit has been "given" to us, within the heart (Gal. 4:6; I John 4:13). We have been "washed", "sanctified", and "justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, ad by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11). We were "translated into the Kingdom of His Dear Son" (Col. 1:13), and "into His marvelous light" have we been called (I Pet. 2:9). We have "passed from death unto life", and know this "because we love the brethren" (I John 3:14). We were "raised" together with Christ (Col. 3:1), and have received the "circumcision made without hands" (Col. 2:11). We have been "born of God" (John 1:12-13), and have "received the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7). To us has been promised "strength by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16), and we have been granted "hope" for an "anchor of the soul" (Heb. 6:19). We have been "sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise" (Eph. 1:13), "redeemed" (I Pet. 1:18), "bought" (I Cor. 6:20), "delivered" (II Cor. 1:10), and "raised" (Eph. 2:6). We are what we are "by the grace of God" (I Cor. 15:10) -- not because we abstain or refrain from anything. We, rather, abstain from "all appearance of evil" because of that work which hath been wrought within us. Without these blessings we have enumerated here, a person is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1-4), and has no part nor lot in the matter of salvation. *It does not matter how many things he does NOT do, if he has not participated in*

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The Word of Truth

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NOT A NEGATIVE ENTRANCE

(From page 1)

the life of God, he is "nothing." This participation is what it means to "enter in", and to become a "new creature" in Christ Jesus (II Cor. 5:17). It is not a negative entrance, but a positive one - submitting to God, who "worketh in you, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). *If it is an entrance into the kingdom that you desire, then it is an obtaining that you need, not merely a refraining.*

Recently I was in a congregation of notable mention in this area. It has many fine attributes, and its largeness seems to not have altogether quenched the Spirit of Christ. I was interested in the introduction of its officers that evening. They were introduced as men that "did not smoke, drink, or go to the show." Now, undoubtedly, these men (several of whom I personally know), had greater qualifications than this, and I do not seek to reproach them. But, it was drawn to my attention, that the same thing might be said of some agnostics and atheists, Buddhists, and Mohammedans. So often people's Christianity is held out on the platter of abstinence. Little or nothing is said of their attainment before the God of all grace, of their increase in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, of their abounding love and increasing faith. But, these are the things that portray the validity of our claims. *If we have no growth in grace, no increase in faith, no victory over sin, no fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, then we ought to have the grace and humility to admit that we are sinful, undone, and full of iniquity!* Let men relate how they have been made "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4), how they are being "conformed to the image" of God's "Son" (Rom. 8:28-30): these are the things that speak to us of personal salvation, of spiritual qualification. It is admitted that these things do not much impress the world; they do not speak to carnal men of dynamic achievement, but rather of "escapism", and of weakness and insipidness. *But the world is wrong, and the carnal mind is undiscerning. These are true achievements which may be wrought only in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.* This calls for strength which no mortal naturally possesses; which no man may borrow from another man; which cannot be developed by natural resources. These qualities are evidences of the Divine power

"THE KNOWN GOD"

"In Judah is God known."—Psa. 76:1

When the Apostle Paul was in that ancient city of Athens, he observed the many idols and images in the city erected to heathen gods. In the midst of the city was one inscribed "to the unknown god" (Acts 17:23). Therein is revealed the Comprehension of all flesh; the God, is unknown! By nature we are "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:1-4), and "enemies of God". We know Him not, nor do we, outside of the influence of the Holy Spirit, desire to know Him! But, praise the Lord, in Jesus Christ there is "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) wrought in the "new creation" (II Cor. 5:17), whereby we are brought to "know the Lord". The distinctive thing about this knowledge, is that "they shall all" know God "from the least to the greatest" (Heb. 8:8-12). Brethren, the religion of Christ is distinctive in every way, but chiefly because **it is characterized by an affinity between the Author of this new life, and the recipients of it.** This affinity is not produced by a mere system of schooling and self-discipline! Such a method is rendered absolutely fruitless in the Lord's scheme of things because the thoughts of man are at variance with the thoughts of God, and are not His (Isa. 55:9-11). The "carnal mind (i.e., the unregenerated mind) is ENMITY (itself) against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7); it "cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:14). Catechisms, confirmations, liturgies, and the like, are all built upon the false premise that men may be indoctrinated into the image of God; that after some method of assimilation into the intellect the mind will be brought into accord with the mind of God. But, this is not at all the case. We are "created" in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10), "born again" (John 3:3-5) by the Spirit of God, and through the instrumentality of the "incorruptible Seed, even the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever" (I Pet. 1:23). We are given a new nature - the very nature of God, the very life of God. We are conformed to Christ's image through the avenue of suffering (Rom. 8:17-30), and are thus brought to know God. **All those who have been born again, and have received the Holy Spirit of promise, know God in their measure.** "In" the spiritual "Judah, God is known!" Praise the Lord for that! **A religion that does not include in it a real knowledge of the Lord - an "acquaintance" with Him - is not of Christ!** We who are of Christ "Know whom we have believed" (II Tim. 1:12), and rejoice in our knowledge of Him. Now, what of you - do you know the Lord? Personally? Are you acquainted with Him - so acquainted that you are sensitive to His leading, cognizant of His working? Do you fellowship with Him, and enjoy His presence. "In Judah, God IS known."

of God within; they are proof of a Kingdom-entrance! Oh reader, I bid you to examine your own faith, your own relationship to the Lord. See the positive development of grace within your heart; your love for the Word, your love for the Lord, your entertainment of a sound mind, your personal apprehension of spiritual truth, victory, joy, peace, and longsuffering. See the development of the Spirit's fruit within YOUR heart (Gal. 5:22-23). These will prove your entrance, and you shall be found praising and magnifying the Lord for His power.

HUNGRY AND THIRSTY

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

—Matthew 5:6

In the natural order, yearnings bring dissatisfaction and anxiety; but in the Spirit, they bring a blessing! The conforming of our minds and thought patterns to spiritual reality requires nothing less than a mighty work of the Holy Spirit. This truth is evidenced rarely as much as in the proper interpretation of the reactions and outreaches of the soul. Earthly philosophy, being the direct product of Satan's delusion, has taught men that feelings of inadequacy are signs of inferiority, and are to be overthrown in favor of self-sufficiency and the pride of life. **But the economy of the Spirit teaches us correctly that in weakness there is strength (II Cor. 12:9, 10), in poverty there is found riches (II Cor. 5:21), in simplicity there is profoundness (II Cor. 11:3; I Cor. 1:27-28), and in foolishness there is wisdom (I Cor. 3:18).** Oh, blessed truth! How precious it is to be identified with the Lord Jesus in the heavenlies, and participate in the "mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16). Learn this truth, brethren, that **the things of the Spirit of God are not conformable to the earth;** nor are earthly conceptions transferrable to the realm of the Spirit. These two realms (earth and heaven, flesh and Spirit) are diverse one from another. Seek, my reader, to have your life transformed "by the renewing of your mind, that ye might prove (discover for yourself) what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).

The Holy Spirit witnesses of spiritual hunger and thirst as an inward yearning and longing for the Lord and His truth. It is a deep seated desire for that which nature cannot supply. It is true that Satan will seize upon such an attitude of soul and seek means whereby he can delude us into believing this is a token of rejection before the Throne. Often has he whispered to my conscience: "You simply haven't done enough, or else this hunger and thirst would not be your portion." He wants men to be complacent in their own strength, and satisfied with the husks of earthly offerings. But he is a Deceiver (Rev. 20:3), and a Liar (John 8:44). **The truth of the matter is that spiritual hunger and thirst evidences that you have seen something! Something of God's grace, and have thus grown discontent with what the world has to offer!** Truly a blessing! Godly men have always had deep desires and longings for the Lord. We certainly ought to feel blessed when we are granted such desires for the Lord, for His grace, for His love, for Truth, for spiritual perfection, etc. This shows we are fellowshiping with the saints of old! **These feelings are expressed in Scripture to enable us to properly rejoice at the manifestations of God's grace within our own lives. They are tokens of deep spirituality, and not of failure and spiritual midgethhood.** Hear the Word of the Lord; "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. . . ." (Psa. 42:1-2); ". . . my soul thirsteth for Thee . . ." (Psa. 63:1-2); ". . . my soul thirsteth

after Thee, as a thirsty land . . ." (Psa 143:6); "Lord, all my desire is before Thee" (Psa. 38:9); ". . . there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee" (Psa. 73:25); "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever . . ." (Psa. 27:4). That is the grand objective of the saints; **UNINTERRUPTED COMMUNION WITH THEIR GOD AND SAVIOR.**

One great desire have I, my Lord
To always hear Thy wondrous Word
And be with Thee of one accord
I faint for such a thirst.

To constantly behold Thy Face
Have nought of earth my sight erase
But always rest in Thy own place
Before this, nought comes first!

The pressing desire of the Apostle Paul was made known to the Philippian brethren. Having caught a spiritual view of the magnitude and splendor of our Savior, he joyfully relinquished all claims to honor, counting but "dung" those things that were gain to him (Phil. 3:7-9). **Intimacy with Jesus Christ in suffering, resurrection, and life, appealed to Paul as water does to a thirsty man (Phil. 3:8-14).** Cost was beside the point! And the full price would be paid! There was manifested a good insight into the absolute poverty of the natural man, and the barrenness of earth. The niceties of earth, and all of her allurements are mirages and delusions, and no truth. **Once a man has been drawn" (Jer. 31:3; John 6:44) to the Lord, and has beheld Him as He is, nothing in this world will ever satisfy him again.** Now there is "one thing" that he desires, and that is to "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life to BEHOLD the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple" (Psa. 27:4). This is true "singleness of heart" (Acts 2:46; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22) Godward, and nothing in the world may supply such a singular desire. In vain do we look to mundane realms for satisfaction of heart; there is no "honey out of the rock" (Psa. 81:16) here which will cause us to be "satisfied." We look to the Lord to answer our hunger and thirst of soul with His own Glorious Person: "Whom have I in heaven but **Thee**, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside **Thee**" (Psa. 73:25); "My soul followeth hard after **Thee**" . . . (Psa. 63:8); "My soul longeth, yea fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psa. 84:2). Oh, there is the reaction of a heart touched by grace! The appetite is stirred Godward! The earth with all of its riches is seen for what it is - a "dry and a thirsty land, where NO water is" (Psa. 63:11).

Such an inward hunger and thirst of soul is richly rewarded by the Lord. We ought to learn to highly esteem it, and treasure it as a most beneficial blessing: ". . . your heart shall live that seek the Lord" (Psa. 69:32); "Let all such as seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee" (Psa. 70:4); "Blessed are they that . . . seek Him with the whole heart" (Psa. 119:2). **This is not a mark of spiritual inferiority, but rather of true blessing!** Did not our Lord declare: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness (God's righteousness -

Matt. 6:33; Phil. 3:9), for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6); "Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled" (Luke 6:21); ". . . he that seeketh findeth . . ." (Matt. 7:8). It is only the "hungry and thirsty" that are invited to partake of Jesus, and "the rich are sent empty away" (Luke 1:53). Hear Jesus' invitation, ye hungry of heart, and come to Him! "Ho, everyone that thirsteth: come ye to the waters and buy" (Isa. 55:1); "If ANY MAN is thirsty, let him come unto me and drink" (John 7:37). Such a gracious invitation must not be spurned - "quench not the Spirit" (I Thess. 5:21); rather you are to receive it thus - run swiftly at His beck! **Our Lord has given the desire as a prelude to the filling!** Praise the Lord. Esteem it as such, and do not "faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:3). Has the Lord not promised to honor your hunger and thirst? - "For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with good things" (Psa. 107:9); "He hath filled the hungry with good things" (Luke 1:53); "God . . . which giveth food to the hungry" (Psa. 146:7); "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isa. 44:3). The supreme qualification for filling, for bread, for water in the soul, is a **LONGING, AN ALL CONSUMING DESIRE FOR THE LORD HIMSELF!** We must not become ensnared in a mere hunger for God's blessings, or to see His work, or to have Him shower us with benefits! No! That is not sufficient! **WE MUST DESIRE HIM; SEEK HIM; WANT HIM!** He, praise God, is the "Rewarder of them that diligently seek HIM" (Heb. 11:6), and you CANNOT please Him or come to Him devoid of such a hunger! **Only God Himself, in the Person of Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, can satisfy the hungry soul!** Programs, activity, results, campaigns - none of these can quiet the inner cryings, and that driving thirst and hunger of soul! The Lord said that He personally would "walk and dwell" in us (II Cor. 6:16), and that alone will gender true confidence of faith.

And what of you, reader? Are you spiritually hungry and thirsty? Is God revealing Himself to you? Are you consumed with the one great desire to behold His wondrous beauty? Has your desire made you unpopular with your church? Think nothing of that - it is honored by the Lord, whether the folk about you honor it or not! Do not cast your eyes manward! If they think it strange that you are "pressing" toward the "prize", and desirous of being "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18), it is because they themselves possess not the life of God! **Our Lord is exceeding large, and once seen truly, will stir within you a longing to be "filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:17-19).** Learn, by faith, to expect an answer to your hunger! God has promised to answer that hunger; it but remains for you to recognize it. He will change your personal dry and thirsty desert land into a well watered fruitful field, where you shall both eat and drink to your fill (Psa. 107:33-38). Remember that "God is faithful, who will also do it" (I Thess. 5:24-25). **And now, oh hungry and thirsty soul, I commit you to Him who both fills and quenches with His own matchless Presence.**

"BUT THEIR EYES WERE HOLDEN"

Luke 24:16

It was a dreary day for those two men on the road to Emmaus. They trudged down the path with a heavy heart; their Master had been crucified and was no longer with them. "To whom would they go" (John 6:68)? He alone "had the words of life." Now, He was gone; aye, and they had dared to suppose that this was He "which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24:21). Now, it seemed obvious to them that they were mistaken. Three years of anxious anticipation under His ministry - all wasted, wasted years! The locusts of anxiety had eaten them up, and there was now a famine within their souls. As they walk down the road, they "commune and reason with one another" (Luke 24:15). Things just didn't make sense; they would recap them, and see if they could find the point where they had failed to discern the futility of their Master's implications. They had witnessed Him heal the sick, raise the dead, heal the lepers, cure the blind, open the ears of the deaf, confound the Scribes, and rebuke the Pharisees. They were there when He fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with but five loaves and two fishes . . . it just didn't add up; now He was dead! What had happened? Their religion seemed vain, pointless, wasted!

As they communed one with another, One joined Himself to them, and began to go with them; it was Jesus Christ, their Master. Yet, we are told that "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him" (Luke 24:16). He asked them of the nature of their conversation, and they began to lament and speak despairingly to him of the death of their Lord (Luke 24:17-21). They even went so far as to recount how that "certain woman also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre and found it even so as the women had said: BUT HIM THEY SAW NOT" (Luke 24:22-24). Aye, a discouraged pair that was; and while Jesus was in their presence, at that! Well, you well remember how that Jesus went to their home; how that their eyes were opened to behold Him, and how they afterward acknowledged that their hearts "burned" within them while He spake to them (Luke 24:25-32).

Somehow, that speaks to my heart of my own life, and I cannot help but believe that I do not stand alone in the matter. There was, indeed, a time in my life when all seemed lost. It appeared as though the religion that I had been introduced to was vain; that my Lord was not really alive. Circumstances had gone beyond my control; despondency had set in. Failure loomed on every hand. It seemed that there was nothing to do but return to the old way of life; my aspirations had proved but delusions; my glowing hopes had fallen to the ground. In the midst of that period of time, the Lord Jesus joined Himself to my heart, and I knew it not. Thinking that it was my conscience, or some strange visitor, I poured out my complaint, and mused within myself of the futility of it all. My eyes, too, were holden, that I could

AFFIRMATION FROM FIRST JOHN

PART I

It is the character of the Holy Spirit to unqualifiedly affirm the truth! It is refreshing to my heart to have the "Spirit of truth" so speak during our day when truth is considered relative and changeable. Our God is immutable, and so His affirmations may not be changed or altered. Praise the Lord! As we read the Scriptures, let us always receive them "as they are in truth, the Word of God" (II Thess. 2:13), not seeking to adapt them to our thoughts and ways, but rather conforming our lives to them. We are exhorted to receive "with meekness the engrafted word, which is able also to save the soul" (James 1:21). Let God's people also learn to **out-assert** the sophists of our age who have duped the world, not with logic, or by intelligent persuasion, but by merely incessantly asserting and affirming their humanly conceived dogmas. Theories are passed off as fact, and few question the reality of them, simply because they are so dogmatically and persistently set forth. **Dogmatism and truth are not at all synonymous; and neither are frequency and immutability!** I do not at all suggest, at this point, that the proclamation of the Gospel of truth (Gal. 1:14; Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5) will be logical and intelligently persuasive from the earth's viewpoint. But, that is not the issue. The Gospel "must be preached" (Mark 13:10), whether received or not, declared our Lord, asserting the necessity of affirming and "publishing" it. Let us learn to so declare the truth of God as we have been given to see it, without the mitigations of doubt and fear, or the admixture of preaching and hopelessness. **If you are not yet persuaded of the reality of these things, then you should do everyone a great service by keeping silence until such time as you may affirm, as did the apostles, "that which you have both seen and heard" (I John 1:1-4).** An affirmation is not a mere passive declaration of obscure truth; **it is the testimony of reality, as personally witnessed and experienced by the affirmer.**

Recently, in one of our fellowships, a teen-age sister in Christ mentioned a particular phrase that attracted her attention in the book of first John. The comments she made were used of the Lord to stimulate my mind on the matter of affirming the truth. The phrase was "THIS IS", certainly introductory words to a statement of positive and immutable reality. "THIS IS" - i.e., this is the truth of the case; this is what actually exists; this is what is set in opposition to delusion and deception. When the nature of the case is perceived, these two words, "this is", will awaken some texts that have slumbered in your conscience, and enable you to build upon them a stable life. In order, the affirmations of first John are as follows:

1. "THIS then IS the MESSAGE which WE have heard of Him, and declare unto you, THAT GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL." (1:5)
2. "THIS IS the PROMISE, that He hath promised us, even ETERNAL LIFE" (2:25).
3. "For THIS IS the MESSAGE that YE have heard from the beginning, THAT WE SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER" (3:11).
4. "And THIS IS His COMMANDMENT, that we should BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF HIS SON

JESUS CHRIST, AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER, as He gave us commandment" (3:23).

5. "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and THIS IS THAT SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (4:3).
6. "For THIS IS the LOVE OF GOD, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and His commandments are not grievous" (5:3).
7. "And THIS IS the VICTORY that overcometh the world, EVEN OUR FAITH" (5:4).
8. "THIS IS HE that came by water and blood, EVEN JESUS CHRIST; not by water only, but by water and blood" (5:6).
9. "THIS IS the WITNESS OF GOD which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself . . ." (5:9-10).
10. "And THIS IS the RECORD, that GOD HATH GIVEN UNTO US ETERNAL LIFE, and this life is in His Son" (5:11).
11. "And THIS IS the CONFIDENCE that we have in Him, that IF WE ASK ANYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, HE HEARETH US" (5:14-15).
12. ". . . the Son of God hath . . . given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true . . . THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, AND ETERNAL LIFE" (5:20).

I am impressed with the diversity of these affirmations. They cover every area of our life, and all spheres of activity. This means that God has provided solid rock for us to build on **everywhere!** A message is affirmed for declaring; a promise for obtaining; a message for receiving; a commandment for obeying; a warning to be heeded; a love to be shed abroad; a victory to be won; a Christ to be enjoyed; a witness to be had within; a record to be believed; a confidence to be had in prayer; a true God to be known and understood! I do not know that I can be dogmatic on this point, but it appears to me that there is no problem, no situation, no circumstance, no attitude, in which we may not derive benefit from these assertions. To the child of God, truth is a liberating thing; once known, it makes us free (John 8:32). When you are assaulted with delusions, and brought to assume that things are what they appear to be, then take unto yourself the truth of God; arm yourself with that. After you have wrestled with the situation, be liberated through the apprehension of a "THIS IS"! Excellent remedy!

If you are pondering a message to be declared, listen not to men; they will deceive you, unless you be filled with the Spirit. The message IS; i.e., it is already provided, and it speaks of reality. You do not have to develop a new message, work on something tantalizing to the intellect that will attract the attention of the world. **There is a message which you must yourself receive, and come, by the Holy Spirit, to appreciate - "GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL!" All illumination issues forth from Jehovah God!** He who abides in Him will not walk in perpetual ignorance! We preach an all sufficient God, with

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"THE THRONE OF INIQUITY"

"Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?"

—Psa. 94:20

There is a "Throne of Holiness" (Psa. 47:8), and a "throne of iniquity" (Psa. 94:20), i.e., one from which issues forth holiness, and one from which proceeds iniquity. The one reigns in order to righteousness, the other in order to sin. The glorified, risen Christ sits upon one; the fallen and reprobate Satan sits upon the other! The two thrones cannot have fellowship with one another; the two upon the thrones have no concord; the constituents of each under-kingdom are separate from one another. The one throne works by the means of life; the other by the means of death. The laws which they respectfully utilize are "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2a), and "the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2b). **The "throne of iniquity" is, however, a subordinate throne, and gives place to the throne of God's "holiness".** "All authority in heaven and earth" has been given to our blessed Lord Jesus (Matt. 28:18), and "He must reign until He hath put His enemies under His feet" (I Cor. 15:25). This knowledge is designed to lift the countenance of the heart, urging it to the realization that "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). **The subordination, however, of "the throne of iniquity" does not negate the fact of its overwhelming power in relation to flesh and blood.** Though a weaker power, it is nevertheless, a power; though subjugated, it reigns after a certain manner, and according to Divine counsels. We are taught to be "sober, be vigilant, for your adversary, the Devil, walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). He is crafty, and so uses his **limited strength** to the fullest, utilizing delusion and the lie as his chiefest weapons. Beware of him and all activity that issues forth from his "throne of iniquity."

The "throne" of which I speak, it is true, is here pictured as being effectual in earthly rulers - rulers of a wicked nature, who gather "themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn innocent blood" (Psa. 94:21). The acme of such endeavors was realized in the ordained opposition of our Lord Jesus Christ, when "the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ . . . both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel" . . . (Acts 4:26-27). What a motely picture; heart-rending, as the kings of this world, acting under their prince, Satan, sought to stamp the glorious Creator from off His creation. Foolish men, wise in their own conceits!

However, they were but the INSTRUMENTS used of God in the rebellion, who actually carried it out, through the instrumentality of Satan. The conspiracy was accomplished by Satan and his spiritual forces through the Jews and the Gentiles, together with their respective rulers. It was

"principalities and powers (spiritual)" which our Lord "spoiled", "triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15). The one that "came" in a great (but yet a lesser) power against Christ Jesus was none other than "the prince of this world" (Jno. 14:30; 16:11); or "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). These two terms are meant to denote Satan's "delivered" power (Luke 4:6), which he exerts upon the earth and in the regions of the air where reside "principalities and powers"; the "rulers of the darkness (spiritual and moral ignorance) of this world", and "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). These are those forces which are sent forth from Satan's "throne of iniquity". Our adversary (I Pet. 5:8) is also referred to as "the prince of devils (demons)" - (Matt. 12:24), each one of which receives his immediate commission from Satan's throne. Equally true, Satan is the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4), employed in the most dastardly iniquity of all: "blinding men's minds, lest they should believe the Gospel and be saved" (II Cor. 4:4-6). Because Satan's work includes all sorts of spiritual and physical violence, his throne is called "the seat of violence" (Amos 6:3). Let us gird up our minds to beware of all activities proceeding from this throne and seat of all evil.

But, the Psalmist speaks of the MEANS used of this interim prince to promulgate iniquity. He "frameth mischief by a law;" wisely and meticulously constructing it. **SIN AND INIQUITY ARE PLANNED AND DESIGNED BY SATAN TO FIT INTO OVER-ALL PURPOSES**, as surely as righteousness and goodness are fitted together into common good. To "frame" means to bring into being, and to order, as in Hebrews 11:3; ". . . the worlds were **FRAMED** by the word of God". When we permit, as it were, the adversary of our souls to "take us captive at his will" (II Tim. 2:26), we must realize that **though words and actions indulged in under his influence may seem insignificant, Satan thoroughly intends that they fit into his heinous purposes.** Beelzebub "frameth" mischief, fitting it together for diabolical purposes set in opposition to righteousness and true holiness. The "mischief", for instance, associated with Christ's death, was all "framed": the pharisees' fear of losing their pre-eminence, Herod's wife's indignation with John the Baptist, the Jews' susceptibility to the sanhedrin's dissimulation, Pontius Pilate's timidity and political fear, the High Priest's pride - **all worked together in a common purpose.** None of the guilty stood diverse from the other; they were "joined hand in hand". It is, however, with great joy that we are brought to understand that though it was their purpose to destroy the "Lord's Christ", their actions literally fulfilled the will of the Lord (Acts 4:27-28; 2:23), then unknown to the "accuser", though settled "from the foundation of the world."

Satan, the occupier of "the throne of iniquity", frames "mischief by a law"! In the text, the immediate application, as I have already said, is to evil earthly rulers - Satan's pawns. These "decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless" (Isa. 10:1). These are described as they who "in heart work

wickedness" and "weigh the violence of their hands in the earth" (Psa. 58:2); i.e., they fulfill their evil intentions within their hearts by utilizing their power for personal wicked purposes. Aye, and many such Satanic influences exist. But, this is not the emphasis which I here seek to make. I desire to go beneath the surface, or obvious meaning, into the principle here contained.

Our concern in studying the Scriptures must always be to see there our own case and needs mirrored. We are to "take heed unto OURSELVES and the doctrine" (I Tim. 4:16); a duo which, when properly united, will make for purity of heart, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. It is Satan's activity toward **individuals** that ought to interest us most! **How does he frame iniquity within me? - that is what must concern me!** How does he seek to fulfill his evil purposes through me? That is the point I seek to know, that I may effectually resist him.

"Law", here, indicates a principle inacted by a controlling authority; a **prescribed** rule of conduct. For instance, God's Law is that principle of righteousness enforced and promulgated by the Ruler over all, Jehovah God. **Satan, however, also maintains his kingdom by a "law" - a principle or rule of conduct which he himself promotes. Without this "law", no "mischief", or sin, can be wrought!** Satan does not work altogether by impulse, but works through tendencies and proclivities toward evil. This tendency, proclivity, or evil compulsion, is called a "law": "I find then A LAW, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7:21). The fact that we loathe and detest this "law" of present evil is good reason for thanksgiving, for in such an attitude, we fellowship with our Lord who also hates evil (Heb. 1:9).

There is a part within man which is unredeemable; a part which shall not be renewed; it is called "flesh", and shall ever remain that (John 3:6). It is anathetical to God (Rom. 8:7-8), and must literally be "put off" (Eph. 4:22), and "crucified" (Gal. 5:24). By "flesh", I do not mean the mere physical body; that shall be exchanged, or "renewed" in the resurrection with a body "like unto" Christ's "glorious (glorified) body" (Phil. 3:20). **"Flesh", in Scripture, speaks of the Adamic nature, together with the unregenerate mind, heart, and affections.** This "flesh" is the mundane ark which contains the "law of sin" (Rom. 7:25). It (the flesh) being filled with the earthly rule of conduct, is ever bent toward sin and degradation. **With the flesh we can do nought but "serve sin"** (Rom. 7:25). Satan works through the medium of the flesh (which includes the mind, the will, the lusts and desires, and a physical structure - Col. 2:18; John 1:13; I Pet. 2:11), framing or constructing sin and transgression by the means of its tendency toward evil - yea, "tendency" is a word too weak! There is a **MILITANCY** in this law which viciously wars against God's will and purposes; "But I SEE another LAW in MY members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in MY members" (Rom. 7:23). There you are! See it! The law is in YOUR very members (the individual aspects of your nature and person), and it will effectually bring you into captivity, capturing you for Satan's rebellious purposes. How often has your own experience veri-

fied that truth for you? Have you not felt the compulsion of that "law" within? That compulsion is nothing less than Satan beginning a framework of an evil and insidious thing; and if you yield to it, you shall yourself be found **DOING** that which is evil. Beware of such drawings, and slay them in the power of the Spirit! **Now, brethren, Satan cannot frame evil in your life apart from this condemned "law."** It alone "wars against the law of my mind" (Rom. 7:23) - i.e., the righteous character of God inscribed upon the "renewed mind" - and it alone bears "evil fruit."

It is refreshing, however, to realize that this wicked "law" is not the only law within us; nor does it hold the bludgeon of usurped dominion over us any longer. Praise God, **"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"** (Rom. 8:2). Here is a rule of conduct which receives its empowerment from on high through the Spirit of the Living God! It is greater and more powerful than Satan's law which issues forth in sin and consequent death; praise the Lord! Now, they that are truly Christ's can crucify (yea, they "HAVE") the "flesh **TOGETHER** with the affections **THEREOF**" (Gal. 5:24). God's people "establish the law" (Rom. 3:1), and live in a realm which is above sin! Being dead to sin, they can no longer "live therein" (Rom. 6:1-4). We are, brethren, commissioned to "put off the sins of the flesh" (Col. 2:11), cleansing ourselves of "all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit" (II Cor. 7:1). By "walking in the Spirit", we are pointedly told that we "will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16); i.e., **by listening to the dictates of the Holy Spirit, we shall find the power of Satan's law so radically diminished as to lose its sway in our hearts and lives.** While it is true that the "flesh lusteth against the Spirit", it is equally true that the "Spirit lusteth against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17), and the Spirit being more powerful (Praise the Lord), offers victory through faith (I John 5:4-5) to YOU! **If you, however, "quench the Spirit" of God (I Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30), it is inevitable that you will do evil!** I say, it is **INEVITABLE!** **You CANNOT combat Satan's law in your own strength!** Oh, how many of you need to know that! You have been unsuccessful in crucifying the flesh because you have sought to do so in self-strength. Slay that damnable self-strength with the flesh and its lusts, for it is properly a part of the Adamic and cursed order!

Now, as a child of God, can you afford in any sense, to have "fellowship" with the "throne of iniquity"? **Dare you to experiment with fleshly affections and to entertain carnal thoughts?** In so doing, you are submitting to that prince of devils, and he shall take you "captive at his will" if you grapple with him in self strength (II Tim. 2:26). In such a condition of captivity to, and fellowship with, Satan, you not only disgrace our Lord Jesus Christ, but **you forfeit any personal evidence of union with God through our Savior!** Galatians 5:24 does not, then, apply to you, and you ought to stand in fear and trembling if such is your case. Surely, there ought to be alarm within the hearts of all that have joined themselves unto the purposes of Satan by permitting his "law of sin and death" to go unchallenged in their lives! You, by grace through faith, may thwart

Satan's work in your life by subordinating his avenue of attack - the flesh (I Cor. 9:27). I warn you that you must "keep under it", and do so with all diligence and godly perseverance! Remember that Satan's law for mischief resides WITHIN YOU. It is to be opposed by you, in the Holy Spirit. Affections, lusts and allurements are to be put off and slain in order that Satan may be rendered impotent in your case. Aspire, by the grace of God, to say with our Lord Jesus; "And now the prince of this world cometh, and hath **NOTHING IN ME**" (John 14:30), i.e., has no sinful tendency within me through which he can work. **Satan is helpless to frame or construct evil without that "law"; so, ought we not to be diligent in subduing it?**

And now, brethren, "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11). Engage in a real combat against the base lusts that are within your own breasts. This is real resistance, and Satan will flee you when it is accomplished.

Affirmation From First John

(From page 5)

whom is no "variableness nor shadow of turning" (James 1:17). And, oh preacher - what is your message? What is the burden of your preaching? Are you engaged in social and moral reform? political issues? meticulous pharisaisms? Here, oh proclaimer, is the message: "**GOD IS LIGHT!**" Not you, not me, not man! **God alone can pull back the curtain on the heart in order that He Himself might shine in** (II Cor. 4:6). Certainly before a man preaches, he ought to know the message, and **THIS IS** the message! **Our salvation and blessings all proceed from this common Fount.** Preach the Lord! Declare what He hath done! Set Him forth as He "of whom are all things" (II Cor. 5:18; Rom. 11:36). Declare Him as He in whom is no darkness, shadow, or variableness; who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). That is your message! Preach it! Declare how He has conveyed the magnitude of His light in the Person of Jesus Christ, the "express image of His person" (Heb. 1:1-4). God is big enough never to be exhausted; He is Light enough so as never to be darkened. Hesitate not to set Him forth in His brightness.

When it comes to the promises, there is a single one that summarizes them all. It "IS", and everything that "pertains to life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3) is directed to this end, even "eternal life" (I Jno. 2:25). **See, there is what God has promised, what He has set His omnipotent hand to do: to confer upon us the privilege of active fellowship with Himself:** "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). **Whatever is promised to God's children is connected to this master-purpose and promise; no good thing usward is divorced from it.** This is the primary "blessing" (Psa. 133:3), under which all other blessings and promises are but classifications. The promises of strength (Psa. 27:14; 31:24), guidance (Psa. 32:8), stabilization and perfection (I Pet. 5:10), and victory (II Cor. 2:14) are all in order to this end - "eternal life"; that we might be "one spirit" with the Lord (I Cor. 6:17). That is eternal life - "the promise."

There is a message to be received by God's people; the message of love one for another! Though we have heard it from the beginning (even from our tutelage under the Law), yet we hear it still; "we **SHOULD** love one another"! And, is that not a pertinent message in a day when self-attainment and love with dissimulation prevails? Are we not admonished to "love the brotherhood" (I Pet. 2:17) - i.e., the "brethren", by adoption, of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). It is not A message, but "**THE** message" - one of absolute pre-eminence which concerns our horizontal relationships. To facilitate the message comes the "commandment", that we "love one another" (I Jno. 3:23), and to enable the fulfillment of the commandment, we are "taught (personally) of God to love one another" (I Thess. 4:9). **However inadequate love may seem to the "carnal mind" (Rom. 8:7), it is that which will "knit together" (Col. 2:2), and must therefore be engaged in "fervently" (I Pet. 1:22).** Do not reject this message, but rather receive it joyfully! His commandments are not "grevious" (I John 5:3).

"But Their Eyes Were Holden"

(From Page 4)

not see Him. Yet, while He fellowshipped with me there, in my low estate, I suddenly came to realize that this was the Lord that I thought had departed! Here He was, protecting me, guiding me, walking with me to my future home, and I knew it not! My heart burned within me as He began to open the Scriptures to me, and expound those things that pertained to Himself, how that "all things work together for good to them that love God; to them that are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:26); how that "God will not suffer me to be tempted above that which I am able to bear, but will, with the temptation also provide a way of escape, that I may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13). My life began to be unfolded, and I saw that what appeared to be calamity was really needful for the presentation of my being to God without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. **Things that I thought to be traversisties were really nothing more than character refinement; the perfecting of faith.** I have noted how that my eyes were holden until I had poured out my heart; until the doubt, the fear, the cross of faithlessness, was brought to the top to be removed by the Refiner. Praise God for that day that Jesus met me on my despondent road; when He lifted the burden from off my shoulder, and gave me peace and rest. It is true, and to this I may attest; "**Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted**" (Matt. 5:4-7). Let me ask you: have you met Jesus on your road of complaint and discouragement? Has He not mellowed your fears, and quieted your raging heart by the manifestation of Himself. Or, perhaps your eyes are yet holden, that you cannot see Him. Examine yourself, now, and be not fearful. If the Lord is in your presence, all shall turn out for your good, and for His glory!